THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government of India has fixed MSP for two basic varieties (medium staple variety (F-414/H-777/J-34) and Long staple variety (H-4) for the cotton season 2008-09. MSP for long staple cotton and medium staple varieties of cotton are fixed at Rs. 3000/- and Rs. 2500/- per quintal leading to the hike of 48% and 39% respectively per quintal over support price fixed for 2007-08. As on 18.2.2009, Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) has purchased 75.23 lakh bales of cotton.

(c) The MSP is fixed by the Government of India every year on the recommendation of Commission on Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) which takes into account all the various relevant factors like cost of production of cotton including global production, consumption and domestic as well as international market price differential.

(d) Does not arise.

Health insurance scheme to weavers

†1000. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ICICI Lombard had been given responsibility by Government to provide the benefit of health insurance scheme to the weavers;

(b) the amount for which provision had been made for this plan and State-wise number of weavers for whom cards had been made;

(c) whether Government is aware of the widespread irregularities in this scheme;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the reasons for not including more than one company in such a big scheme and whether that could not have created sense of competition in them; and

(f) the steps being taken by Government for modification in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Government of India has been implementing the Health Insurance Scheme for handloom weavers through ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Ltd.

(b) A provision of Rs. 775.00 crore has been made for the Health Insurance Scheme during the Eleventh Plan. State-wise number of weavers enrolled under the Health Insurance Scheme during the Eleventh Plan *i.e.* 2007-08 and 2008-09 (upto December, 2008) is given in the enclosed Statement. (*See* below).

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) Government of India is not aware of any widespread irregularities under the scheme.

(d) Does not arise

(e) The insurance company for implementing the Health Insurance Scheme was selected by the Government of India through invitation of competitive bids from the insurance companies. The ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Ltd., being the lowest bidder was selected for implementing the scheme for the handloom weavers in the country. Therefore, the scheme is being implemented through one company namely ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Ltd.

(f) No modification is proposed in the procedure for selection of company under the Health Insurance Scheme.

Statement

State-wise weavers enrolled under Health Insurance Scheme during 2007-08 and 2008-09

Name of State	2007-08	2008-09 (upto December, 2008)
1	2	3
Andhra Pradesh	127594	19406
Arunachal Pradesh	12318	777
Assam	464635	176542
Bihar	7783	25000
Chhattisgarh	—	3722
Delhi	289	—
Gujarat	1341	2653
Goa	—	—
Haryana	—	25977
Himachal Pradesh	—	10940
Jammu and Kashmir	—	517
Jharkhand	23000	6200
Karnataka	40437	12500
Kerala	5974	8000
Madhya Pradesh	21368	1472

1	2	3
Maharashtra	—	1523
Manipur	18866	32345
Meghalaya	17000	20222
Mizoram	—	187
Nagaland	—	17266
Orissa	45812	12686
Pondicherry	—	—
Punjab	—	—
Rajasthan	2047	4078
Sikkim	—	118
Tamil Nadu	284646	17747
Tripura	24003	16182
Uttar Pradesh	431921	371617
Uttarakhand	—	6161
West Bengal	245000	51314
TOTAL:	1774034	844902

Steep rise in price of cotton

†1001. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been steep rise in the prices of cotton during the last months of financial year 2008-2009;

(b) if so, the percentage of hike and quantum of hike in the prices of cotton which is used in the handloom industries in the country;

(c) whether many handloom units are getting sick due to this price rise; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) No, Sir. The prices of raw cotton which started declining from the commencement of the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.